

6 Questions With Murtha Cullina Partner And New ALI Member

By **Sameer Rao**

Law360 (August 10, 2021, 4:24 PM EDT) -- For Jennifer Morgan DelMonico, joining the legal advocacy-oriented American Law Institute's membership was a significant accomplishment in a career full of them.



Jennifer Morgan DelMonico

The Murtha Cullina LLP product liability litigator and partner successfully joined the ALI's ranks this June, after making it through an election process that included support by three current members and two rounds of committee votes. Her election came about one year after she completed a six-year term as Murtha Cullina's firmwide managing partner. Before then, DelMonico had also served as office managing partner for the firm's New Haven office, where she has worked since joining Murtha Cullina as an associate in 2000.

DelMonico, along with former judge and fellow Connecticut-based attorney Christopher F. Droney of Day Pitney LLP, is part of a 41-person class of new ALI members that includes influential jurists, legal scholars, attorneys general and private practice attorneys throughout the country. ALI Senior membership manager Jane E. Giacinto previously told Law360 Pulse that these new members will have control over how they engage with the ALI, a Philadelphia-based organization that conducts research and advocacy on best practices throughout the legal world.

She takes decades of experience in corporate litigation, including matters of first impression under Connecticut law and successful defense of companies across industries, into this new leadership role with the prestigious organization. She also carries with her non-firm leadership experience that ranges from Lex Mundi Ltd, the law firm network for which she is board treasurer, to her past chair roles with the Connecticut Business and Industry Association.

DelMonico called her recent election "a real professional honor" in an email interview with Law360 Pulse that also touched on her prior accomplishments and practice highlights. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

How did you find out about your election to the ALI?

In June 2021, ALI informed me that I had been nominated for elected membership in the organization. After reviewing the expectations and confirming my firm would be supportive, I accepted the nomination. Shortly thereafter, ALI notified me that I had been elected. I did not solicit the nomination; the nomination process is confidential.

In a career with many examples of service leadership, what does it mean to you to be elected to the ALI?

It is a real professional honor to be elected to the ALI, given the intellectual caliber and professional achievements of its members, as well as the important work the ALI does to further its mission "to clarify, modernize, or otherwise improve the law to promote the better administration of justice."

What will your role with the institute now look like?

Unknown. I am a member (with no other title or set of responsibilities). I look forward to actively participating in the work of the ALI.

What did your involvement with the ALI prior to this election look like?

I have not been involved personally in the work of the ALI, but my father (retired law professor Thomas D. Morgan) has been an active member for over 40 years. As a result, I have been familiar with the ALI for decades and appreciate the important role it plays in our profession and in our society.

Looking back at your career, what would you say is your biggest accomplishment?

My biggest professional achievement was serving as the managing partner of Murtha Cullina LLP for six years. It was an honor to serve my partners and our clients by leading the firm, and to have the opportunity to grow and improve the firm. There were many challenges, including — of course — the COVID-19 pandemic, but I enjoy a challenge, and it was very rewarding work.

What drew you to product liability litigation as a practice area?

Product liability work usually involves complex science, engineering and medical issues. I enjoy working with our clients and our expert witnesses to learn the issues involved in each case, and eventually translate them into language that non-experts can understand.